

173 together in a cluster of huts, and several clusters together formed a
621 division, inhabited by members of a segment of greater span.
631 Larger segments corresponded to complete villages and the largest
segments of all contained many separate villages. The same general
pattern of settlement was repeated at successive halting places on
the migration, but as a segment grew in size by natural increase
and by the addition of more captives, so its settlement grew from a
cluster to a division and from a single village to a group of villages.
In a large segment with many villages, the constituent inferior
segments remained under the political leadership of the lord of the
large segment but achieved a certain amount of autonomy. On
many occasions the interests of one or more inferior segments
diverged from those of the rest of the large segment, from what we
shall term the *residue* of the large segment. This divergence of
interest sometimes led to the disappearance of the large segment
as an effective social unit and, at the highest level in the residential
system, to splits in the State itself.

173 The first bevy of wives formed by a lord ranked senior to other
595 beves, and the wife in charge was the lord's great wife. Her eldest
613 son was his main heir and the eldest son of each bevy leader was
621 heir in its own segment. Yet sons, whether heirs or not, were able to
631 establish segments of their own for their wives when they married
and these segments remained as distinct social groups when an
heir succeeded. Thus a man could be lord of a segment founded by
his father and at the same time lord of a smaller segment, within
the first, which he had founded himself. This arrangement was of
fundamental importance in the working of the residential system,
particularly in the formation of those large and politically dominant
segments with which we are mainly concerned in this book, and
still finds expression in the new villages founded by each reigning
county chief. When the Paramount Chief, or one of his sons,
founded a segment for a bevy of queens, the new segment was of
village size and many men were called by the chief from existing
segments to join the new one. As the segment grew in size, minor
segments within it broke out to form separate villages of their own
and the parent village became the headquarters of the group of
villages and of the segment they formed. The headquarters of all
large dispersed segments endured as social groups, as villages, despite
the continual throwing off of more and more satellites. Thus the
number of large villages, each the headquarters of a segment founded
for a bevy of a reigning chief, increased as time went on. These
villages remain to-day, and Ngoni history is largely the story of the
formation and development of the segments associated with them.

5. Under Zwangendaba's leadership

When the Ngoni migration began, the greater portion of Zwangendaba's followers belonged to the primal segment founded for the great wife of Hlatshwayo, father of Zwangendaba. When the migration began there were perhaps a thousand people in this segment (this figure is largely guesswork). For convenience of reference we shall refer to the various historically significant segments by numbers. Thus segment 1, with the proper name of Elangeni, is that of Hlatshwayo's great wife. The structural relationship of seventeen numbered segments to each other and to the royal genealogy is shown in Diagram 1. A list of their proper names and of the names of the lords and ladies associated with them, is given in Table II, together with information on three segments superior to segment 1 and on three other segments which cannot be placed on Diagram 1 for lack of information.

This diagram and the accompanying table are skeletons, showing only those few men and women who were heads of major groups which, partly fortuitously, have endured to the present day and are now large chiefdoms. There were many more queens than the ten shown on the diagram and very many more sons of chiefs, regional governors, lieutenants and other less exalted men and women all of whom were in charge of named segments, many of which still survive, forming part of a single system. The same principles of organization applied at all levels in the residential system. Here we have set out the names and positions of only the major limbs of the tree of State. We must not forget that the minor branches and little twigs were part of the same growing whole.

Segment 1 included the greater portion of the State, but it is clear from Elmslie and Fraser, and made explicit by Read, that the headquarters of several superior segments were also present on the march north. Read states that villages belonging to nine generations of chiefs were still in existence in northern Nyasaland in 1936. There is no direct evidence from Fort Jameson, for there are no headquarters of ancient royal segments there, but there are several villages belonging to the lieutenants of segments founded by Zwangendaba's father. I have therefore included in Table II the three superior segments whose names are given by Chibambo.¹⁷ It is probable that Zwangendaba had succeeded to the position of

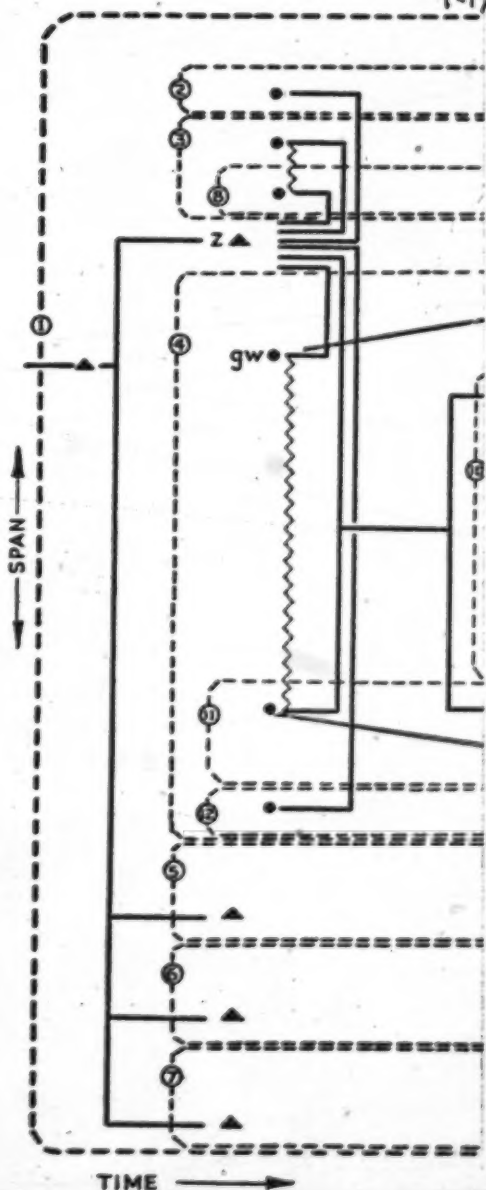
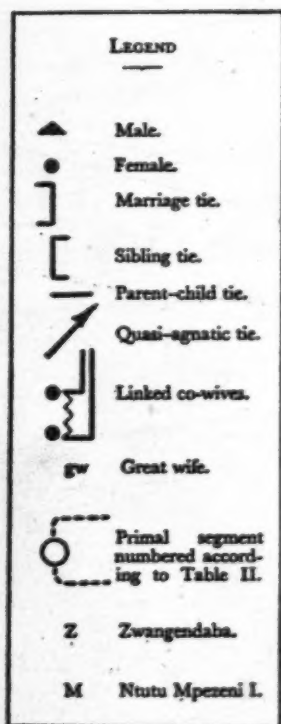
[Text continues on page 15]

¹⁷ Read, 'Tradition', pp. 463f; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 14.

1: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

DIAGRAM 1. THE ROYAL LINE
AND THE RESIDENTIAL SYSTEM

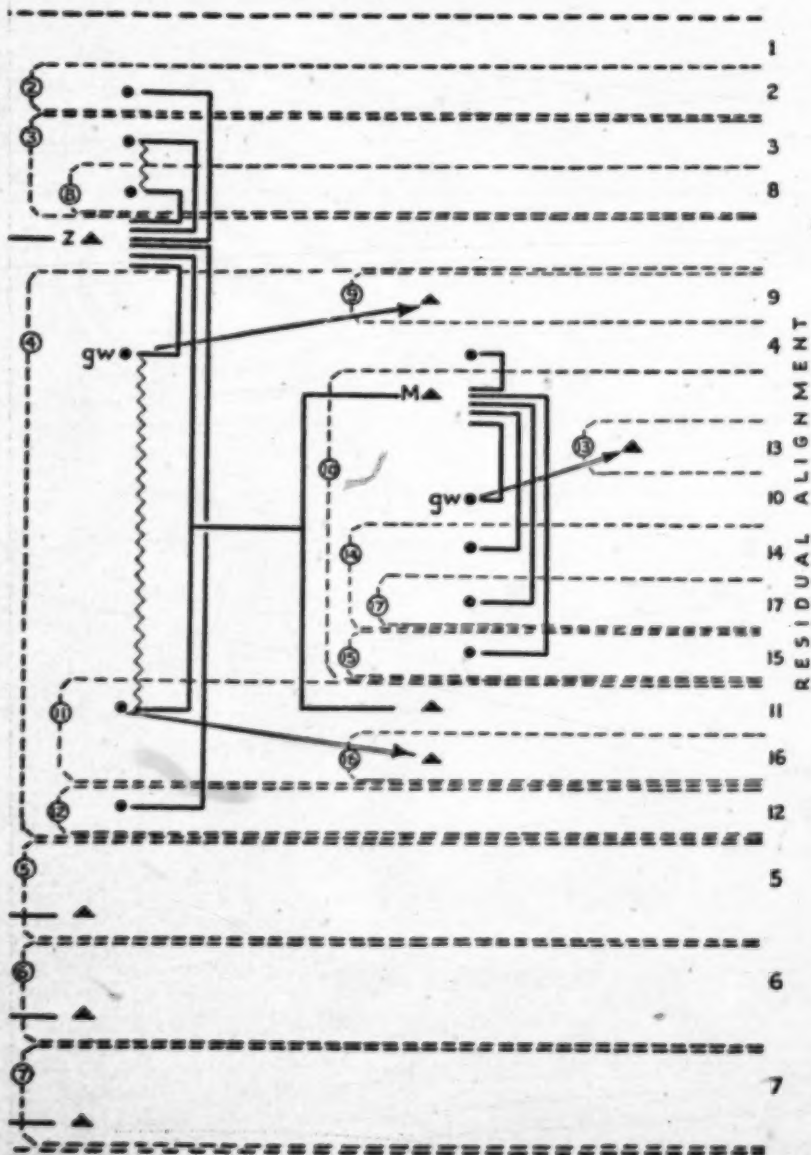
SEGMENTS
1-17



[Diagram I (A)]
[Facing page 13]

1: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

DIAGRAM 1. THE ROYAL LINE AND THE RESIDENTIAL
SYSTEM
SEGMENTS 1-17



[Diagram 1 (8)]
[Facing page 13]

lord of many segments superior to his own and that at least part of these superior segments came with him on the migration. 1973

Within segment 1, Zwangendaba established inferior segment 18 (Emveyeyeni or Mveleleni) for his great wife. This segment or part of it was subsequently annihilated and for that reason its relationship to later segments is obscure; I have not been able to place it on Diagram 1. Three of Zwangendaba's younger brothers founded segments 5, 6 and 7 (Kunyeneni, Nyungweni and Engwenyameneni) within segment 1. Zwangendaba formed two subsidiary beves of wives and made segments 3 and 2 (Ekwendeni and Emcisweni)¹⁸ for them, presumably inferior to segment 18. Another bevy of wives with their own segment 19 (Emsizini) is mentioned by Chibambo and Rangeley, but its relation to other segments is not recorded. It seems probable that segment 19, like segments 2 and 3, was inferior to the ill-fated segment 18. 613 595 621 631 643

There was a practice among the Ngoni whereby some of the co-wives in a bevy were grouped into *linked* pairs or trios. If a wife was barren or old or if her parents wished to honour her husband, she was given an agnatic kinswoman as her junior linked co-wife. Children born by the junior wife then ranked as if they had been borne by her linked senior.¹⁹ Zwangendaba's great wife, the lady of segment 18, was barren but she had a junior linked co-wife who became pregnant. During her pregnancy an incident occurred of historical importance. It was, and still is, customary to offer beer to the Paramount Chief whenever it is brewed in the headquarters of important segments. During this wife's pregnancy beer brewed in the headquarters of segment 18 was offered to Zwangendaba. He thought that the beer was doctored or had filth in it and assumed that there was a plot to kill him. He sent warriors to destroy the headquarters of the segment, which thus disappeared as a political unit. However some of the probable constituent 1973 595 613 643 [273] [682]

¹⁸ Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', p. 38, records an alternative tradition that the lady of segment 3 was the first woman to be made great wife, and that she was later demoted in favour of the lady of segment 18.

¹⁹ See my *Marriage*, pp. 4, 6, 34, 94.

NOTES

- (a) Ancestor of present Chief Mloniyeni, Fort Manning Division.
- (b) Ancestor of former Chief Mloniyeni and present Chief Teleka, Fort Jameson District.
- (c) Not an ancestor of present Chief Miaholo, who belongs to segment 11.
- (d) Not to be confused with a segment of the same name formed by Chief Mpezeni III in 1948.
- (e) Not shown on Diagram 10.

¹ [see table on page 14. - Analyst]

173 parts of the segment, namely segments 2, 3 and 19, survived as
613 independent inferior segments within segment 1. The lieutenant
575 in charge of the warriors spared the pregnant queen and hid her.
643 She bore a son, Ntutu Mpezeni, and later was shown to Zwangendaba who received her kindly and, according to Chibambo, ordered her to live with her son in the headquarters of segment 1. She was not in charge of a bevy of wives, and as by this time the great wife was dead, the bevy in segment 3 now became Zwangendaba's senior bevy. Mwambara, eldest son of the leader of this bevy, was thus a candidate for the main heirship but owing to the disappearance of segment 18 and the subsequent reconciliation between Zwangendaba and Mpezeni's mother, the relative status of the two sons was uncertain. This uncertainty may have been one of the precipitating causes in the subsequent break-up of the State.

[114] Rangeley's version of this incident is that after he had been shown Mpezeni, Zwangendaba ordered the headquarters of segment 18 to be rebuilt. This seems less likely to be true than the version we have followed, since there is, as far as I know, no present-day village which we can identify as the headquarters of this segment.²⁰

173 From Delagoa Bay, Zwangendaba went up the Limpopo
167 Valley into Mashonaland. He fought with Kalanga and other
721 Shona peoples and there was renewed fighting with other refugee groups under Soshangane and Nxaba. In 1835 Zwangendaba's group crossed over to the north side of the River Zambezi near Zumbo and settled in Nsenga country for four years. They moved on again along the eastern rim of the Luangwa basin and eventually arrived in about 1842 in Ufipa, on the east side of Lake Tanganyika. Here in about 1845 Zwangendaba died.

114 Two points of historical detail may be mentioned here. There is reliable
173 evidence for a raid made on a Portuguese fort at Delagoa Bay on 22 October 1833
167 by some of Soshangane's people.²¹ Poole and Winterbottom state explicitly that
721 Zwangendaba's men also took part in this attack, and Lancaster seems to imply the same. According to the chronology adopted by Young and by Poole himself Zwangendaba was at this time four hundred and fifty miles away in the Kalanga country of Southern Rhodesia and it therefore seems unlikely, though not impossible, that he participated in this raid. Elmslie, Young and Chibambo do not mention it at all, and Bryant refers only to Soshangane's part in it.

A few years after Zwangendaba left Natal, he was followed by Mzilikazi, a chief who for a while fought under Shaka and then fled from him with his followers.

²⁰ Winterbottom, 'Angoni paramountcy', pp. 126f; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, pp. 26f; Rangeley, 'Mtwalo', pp. 58f.

²¹ Theal, *Portuguese in South Africa*, pp. 279f.

1773 When it arrived in Fort Jameson District Mpezeni's group
667 consisted of three segments 4, 5 and 6, all of which belonged to the
631 now dispersed segment 1. By virtue of his claim to be the heir of
643 Zwangendaba, and hence the lord of segment 1, Mpezeni exercised
control over segments 6 and 7 as well as over his own segment 4.
It appears that the same procedure was adopted with these
adhering segments as was followed earlier with the small groups of
independent refugees who joined Zwangendaba near Delagoa Bay.
For purposes of organization they were attached to the head-
quarters of the highest segment. As the headquarters of segment 1
had gone away with Mwambara's group, the senior segment head-
quarters in Mpezeni's group was now that of segment 4, and it was
to this village that people from all three segments came to the first
fruits festival, and which we may perhaps regard as the capital of
Mpezeni's State.

It so happened that in 1898 when British Administration began
in this area, the headquarters and most of the dependent villages of
segments 6 and 7 lay on the east side of the Zambezi-Nyasa
watershed, and the bulk of segment 4 on the west. We might
expect that at any place at which this Ngoni group settled, the
three major segments of the State would occupy roughly distinct
areas, and that as segments 6 and 7 were smaller than segment 4
they might lie on the fringe of the settlement. What appears to
have happened is that the Ngoni moved eastwards into that region
where the Europeans first found them, and that they were contem-
plating moving farther east into the present Nyasaland. Segments
6 and 7 were in the van of this advance, and the watershed, which
here runs very roughly north and south, happened by accident to
separate them from segment 4. This accident has been of con-
siderable importance in the subsequent history of Mpezeni's group,
[649] for while segment 4 found itself in the territory of North-Eastern
Rhodesia, administered by the British South Africa Company,
segments 5 and 6 formed part of the Nyasaland Protectorate, under
the Foreign Office. Thus the State was again divided into two, and
the Native Authorities which have developed belong to two separate
hierarchies of administration.

1773 In this study we are particularly concerned with the fortunes
613 of segment 4, in Northern Rhodesia. Although Mpezeni was the
643 head of this segment, it seems that his physiological mother was not
644 lady of the segment, for she was only a junior linked co-wife.
595 However this woman was prompted to independent status by the
formation, within segment 4, of segment 11 (Dingeni) of which she
became the lady. The senior man in this segment was her second

son, while her first son Mpezeni remained head of segment 4 as if he had been borne by her linked senior. Traditionally, a junior linked co-wife who had borne sons that had been taken over by her linked senior might be rewarded for her services by the formation of her own segment, to which she took her youngest son, and the disposition of sons in segments 4 and 11 was in accord with this principle. Another wife of Zwangendaba who was attached to segment 4 was given her own segment 12 (Mkucweni) in which she lived with two linked juniors and other quasi-related dependants. A lieutenant of segment 4 made his own inferior segment 9 (Cikenkheni). 173 643 644 595

At the next generation level Mpezeni created segment 10 (Loangeni) for his great wife and later established two subsidiary beves of wives in segments 14 (Fumbeni) and 15 (Cimpinga). Within one of these, segment 14, a junior wife made her own segment 17 (Ngiyelweni) and Mpezeni placed another wife in the headquarters of segment 4, in accordance with the custom by which the heir to any large segment placed one of his wives in the headquarters of that segment. Finally, in each of segments 10 and 11, a lieutenant broke out of the headquarters to found his own segment, namely 13 (Tondweni) and 16 (Fafazeni) respectively. Many other segments, large and small, were created but we have now mentioned all the segments under Mpezeni's control which later became the nuclei of counties in the Native Authority system and whose relative positions are shown in Diagram 1.

8. Foreign policy

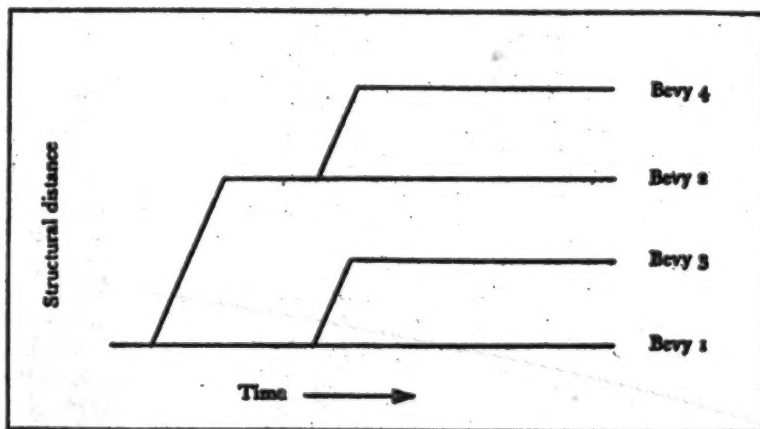
The Fort Jameson Ngoni are described by pre-conquest travellers as living during the 1890s in a compact area surrounded by a belt of uninhabited country, beyond which were the tribes they raided. It seems probable that this spatial arrangement was not followed consistently throughout their history and that at various times and places the Ngoni came to some agreement with their neighbours whereby they either settled among them or established a settled rule over them. Thus Young, writing of the period 1835-9, says that the Ngoni settled among the Senga (Nsenga). Chibambo, however, says of the same period that the Ngoni 'captured many Senga without difficulty'.³⁴ The evidence is more definite for the period 1860-80, so far as Mwambara's group is concerned. Chibambo lists the tribes conquered by Mwambara in this period and adds: 'After overcoming them the Ngoni acted wisely; they did not break up local rule, or ways of 173 361 721 173 361 727

³⁴ Young, *History*, p. 111; Chibambo, *My Ngoni*, p. 22.

231 cattle did not give rise to any cleavage of interest which was not
262 already present in the residential system.
727

[557] The system could also be manipulated by disputes about
595 succession. If a man had many bevy's of wives there was usually no
611 doubt concerning which was the senior bevy and who was the great
wife in it. Yet in general it was not possible to rank a man's bevy's
in a simple linear order of seniority, any more than the segments

DIAGRAM 3. RANKING OF BEVIES



to which they corresponded could be ordered in this way. In topological terms, ranking of bevy's and of segments among the Ngoni was only partially, not simply, ordered. An example, illustrated in Diagram 3, will make this clear.

Suppose a man started with bevy 1 and then took part of it to form bevy 2. Later he took another part of bevy 1 to form bevy 3 and took part of bevy 2 to form bevy 4. With four bevy's of wives, his senior bevy was bevy 1 and his great wife was the leader of bevy 1. Her eldest son was his principal heir, and if she had no sons the eldest son by the next wife in her bevy became heir. But suppose there was no son by any wife in bevy 1. Which band provided the principal heir? It seems clear that bevy 4 did not, at least not if there were sons in bevy 2, for bevy 2 was senior to bevy 4. Bevy 2 might be regarded as senior to bevy 3, for it was formed from bevy 1 earlier. On the other hand, with reference to bevy 2, bevy 3 was merely a part of bevy 1 and hence the search for heirs should be continued in bevy 3 before shifting to bevy 2. Unfortunately I

have no clear history of this kind of situation, but it seems possible⁵⁹⁵ that when there was no heir who could clearly claim ascendancy⁶¹¹ over the whole of a primal segment, the segment then split into two. Thus in our example, if there were sons in beviies 2 and 3 but not in bevy 1, the primal segment formed for the great wife in bevy 1 would in the next generation have split into two segments, one led by the heir in bevy 2 and the other by the heir in bevy 3. This hypothesis would be in accord with some of the disputes which I^[578] recorded between eldest sons by different mothers, each claiming to be the principal heir of their father.

Information drawn from village histories shows that there were sometimes similar disputes about which son of the great wife should be heir. The eldest son could be passed over if he were an obvious fool, and there was, therefore, the possibility of conflict between those who thought him a fool and those who did not. When the first wife married did not become the great wife, her eldest son was sometimes older than the great wife's son, and was sometimes his rival as heir. The contradiction between superordination by age and by status of mother among half-brothers brought up in the same vicinity led to conflict. A fourth mode of conflict was between a man's son and his lieutenant. Where the son was unsuccessful in commanding the loyalty of his father's dependants, effective leadership in his father's segment sometimes passed to the lieutenant.

We should, I think, be mistaken if we regarded these modes of dispute as causes. They were rather the idioms in which, in this particular system, rivalry was expressed between contiguous segments. Many dependants brought power and prestige for their lord, and the struggle for dependants went on within this remarkably flexible and yet orderly system. A man attracted dependants by remaining loyal to his lord; yet the more dependants he gained the more he differentiated himself from his lord. If a man was not the rightful heir in one segment, then he could try to gain the support of the lord of a higher segment and hope thereby to alter the distribution of power in the lower one. This consideration became particularly important after the arrival of Europeans, who exercised control over the whole State and at the same time were ignorant of and not bound by the values which maintained the old system.^[648]

We have mentioned the possibility of conflict between heirs arising from the method of ranking beviies. The same principle of ranking applied to segments and headquarters as well as to beviies of wives, and there were similar possibilities of conflict. In certain situations it appears as if that which was founded first was dominant,⁵⁷⁸
⁶¹¹
⁶²¹
⁵⁵⁴

before it can be moved further. The same accumulation of snow then begins again with each fragment. 178
611

We can readily see that this system was one of great flexibility. 619
The rules of the system were fairly definite, and the principles of agnatic descent and primogeniture were never violated. Yet it was a system very susceptible to manipulation, and one appropriate to a society with a rapidly expanding population recruited mainly by capture. The relationships between a man and his wives, his sons, and his other dependants provided the basis for differentiation within his segment, but they did not determine in advance which wife should be made leader of a bevy, which bevy should get most dependants, which of his younger sons he should favour, which dependants he would appoint as lieutenants. [595]

Without a continual inflow of captives this wide pattern of segmentation might not have produced anything more than a lineage system on the same lines as the Zulu and Swazi. The captives were the bulk which swelled the segments, which benefited one segment at the expense of another. This system provided quasi-agnatic affiliation to people whose actual parentage was unknown or irrelevant. Because of this source of supply, much greater segmentation was achieved in each generation than was possible in an orthodox lineage system. The whole system lasted only seventy-seven years for the Fort Jameson group, corresponding roughly to three generations, yet almost the whole population of the Ngoni groups stemming from Zwangendaba, numbering perhaps half a million people, could at the end of that time trace quasi-agnatic ascent back to him or his forebears. [727]
[597]

Membership of age-sets gave rise to one set of bonds which cut across the lines of segmentary division; those bonds created by marriage gave rise to another. A man in one segment was linked by ties of affinity to men in several others, and because of these ties interacted with them on formal and informal occasions, exchanged cattle with them, and had a joint interest with them in their common descendants. Though segments were not exogamous, a wife from a structurally distant segment had in general a higher status and was more likely to be selected as leader of a bevy than was one from the same minor segment as her husband. Within a segment a son of the lord might marry the daughter of a lieutenant, and lieutenants sometimes married daughters of their lord, thus blending the bonds of affinity with those of quasi-agnation. As the heads of segments, married women played a more important role than we usually associate with them in strongly patrilineal societies. [56]
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582
[554]
[82]
611
The lady of a segment retained her connexion with the segments 602

the reigning chief is the grandson of the founder of the county segment, there is one minor segment founded by his father within which he has founded his own segment. In counties where there have been more than three successive heads of the segment, there will be more than one segment intervening between the county segment and that of the reigning chief. With the decline in polygyny, most chiefs have had only one bevy of wives or even a single wife, so that they have been each able to found only one segment. It will be convenient to speak of 'chief's segment' for a segment founded by a reigning chief, and of 'regal segment' for a segment founded by a former chief. With this nomenclature, each chief's segment becomes regal on the death of its founder. [595] [611]

This terminology links up with our use of the terms *regal* and *chief's villages*, as I have defined them elsewhere.²⁴ The headquarters of a regal segment is a regal village, and the headquarters of a chief's segment is a chief's village. Similarly the headquarters of a county segment is a capital village. [631] [622] [643]

In general we may refer to capital, regal and chief's villages collectively as royal villages, for they represent the chieftainship, and the history of the State, as against the diverse particular interests represented by the villages led by commoners. Four minor chiefs are, however, not agnatic descendants of Zwangendaba, and we can call their segments and villages royal only with qualification. Two of these four chiefs use the royal descent-name, and they all generally ally themselves with their royal colleagues. Yet there are many Ngoni in these pseudo-royal counties, particularly true agnatic descendants of Zwangendaba or of regional governors, who are scornful of the royal pretensions of their county chiefs. [611] [578]

Some of the junior kinsmen of Zwangendaba became leaders of independent Ngoni groups. None of the junior sons of Mpezeni I became independent leaders but some of them or their descendants did become county chiefs. None of the junior sons of Nsingu or Mpezeni II became chiefs and under the present system none of them is likely to do so. Nevertheless they founded segments, and this has happened in every junior line. In each county, as well as the county, regal and chief's segments, whose founders have been on the direct line of succession to the chieftainship, there are also segments founded by junior members of the chiefly house. These we shall term *cadet segments* and the headquarters of a cadet segment a *cadet village*.

²⁴ Barnes, 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 204-6. In an earlier publication, 'Political development', p. 106, I used the adjective *private* in place of *regal* and *chief's*.

1: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

TRANSITION

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the same processes we have seen at work in the formation of segments. Those villages are linked which have a common origin, and the mechanism of dispersal is still the same as in pre-conquest times. Sons of a headman still break out of their natal village and lieutenants and others move off to make their own villages. However, with the decline in polygyny, fewer new villages arise from the formation of new bands of wives by a headman. [178] [595]

Secondly, the village has become more important than before, and village membership is now critical in a wide variety of situations. Thirdly, because it has become easier to move from one village to another than to form a new village, the genealogical structure of the village has become highly diversified as compared with segments of similar size in the old system. 628 621 178

Thus, the transition has been from a State based on a continuously segmenting political system to a minor unit of administration in a modern State. The new order has grown out of the old, not as the result of any professed policy of preserving indigenous forms of political organization, but because the aims of the Administration were essentially conservative, because it was concerned with preserving order in the country as cheaply as possible and did not wish to introduce economic and political changes which would conflict with the supply of labour to other areas scheduled for earlier development; and because for the most part those individuals who occupied powerful positions in the old régime were best able to survive in the struggle for power which determined the eventual form of the new. Therefore, although their entry into the colonial empire was so much more abrupt than that of their matrilineal neighbours, the political system to which Ngoni are now subject bears many more superficial similarities to its former condition than is the case among the Cewa and others. The changes have been great, as we have seen, but the symbols and names remain, with changed significance, to remind Ngoni of their past. 178 64

A ROYAL VILLAGE AFTER 1933

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the Paramount's interest in modern aspects of administration, especially after his visit to the course for chiefs held at the Jeanes School in Zomba in 1934. The old councillors, sceptical though they were of many modern innovations, recognized that they were in line with European ideas of administration, and also that they appealed to the younger educated men in the kingdom who had travelled and seen other countries and ways of living. 643

The Paramount married NaNdau as his big wife, and though, as the text mentions, he married two other wives when urged by the senior men, he sent them away after a year or two and NaNdau remained his only wife. She had an assured position since she bore him five sons and two daughters, the first-born being a daughter and receiving all the respect due to a Royal Sister. One of the brothers of NaNdau was chief of a division, and another was *mlomo wenkosi* to the Paramount. She succeeded in maintaining much of the traditional pattern in the royal village and the big house. Her personal supervision of the household was thorough and competent. She exercised complete authority over the girls and women belonging to the household and arranged that the Ngoni custom of examining the young girls, including her own daughter, at regular intervals should be maintained. Her knowledge of Ngoni songs and dances, and her own skilled and graceful participation in the dances on state occasions, brought her before the people in her role as the big wife. At the feasts given by the Paramount she moved about among the people to serve them, and listened to complaints from the women about affairs in their villages which she then handed on to her husband. 595 586 644

The back verandah and all the outbuildings were the domain of the Paramount's wife. When I was there, she had some ten or twelve girls and women as well as several men working for her. They came and went if they had homes elsewhere, and the personnel changed often. All the household work was done by them: bringing water and fuel, pounding maize, and a good deal of the cooking, though this was closely supervised by the Paramount's wife. No beer was made in the household as it was against the rules of the church to which they belonged. In other Ngoni households of subordinate chiefs and *alumuzana* who were not Christian, the brewing of beer was a time-absorbing part of the household tasks and was shared by the different wives under the supervision of the big house. In Maganga, when the Paramount was entertaining unexpected guests and wanted to offer them beer, he inquired from his *induna* if anyone was brewing beer in the village, and sent for some for which he paid. When he knew beforehand that guests were coming who would expect beer to be offered to them as part of the Paramount's hospitality, he told his *induna* to see that beer was made in one of the village households, and he paid for it. 273

The cooking which went on in the big house kitchens was always extensive. The Paramount, his wife and six children had two meals a 643 574 264

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THE NGONI POLITICAL SYSTEM

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royal women. In the royal villages in the 1930's there was one big *induna* and several lesser ones whose position and functions will be described in Chapter IV.

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This 'going out' of the new Paramount's village, leaving the former Paramount's village as the *gogo* village, brought about some re-distribution of authority, prestige and material goods. It gave the new Paramount his own village, always to be known as his, even after his death. His village became the focal meeting-place for the territory and for the court and territorial officials who surrounded the Paramount; and it was to the new royal village that the *alumuzana* in pre-European days came frequently to visit the Paramount and report to him on conditions in their areas. His moving out of the *gogo* village, on the other hand, gave his brothers who stayed there, and especially those of the *gogo* house, more freedom and authority within that village as well as responsibility for the conduct of all ritual matters relating to the kingdom. The Paramount's big wife had to take her place as the leading woman in the new village and to order the affairs of the wives attached to her house in consultation with the Paramount's mother. Cattle, beer and food for the royal household became the concern of the new village, and the *izinduna* and the royal women had to plan and manage the economy of a capital where political interests converged and where visitors and hangers-on were constantly turning up.

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The following text by Chief Mtwalo Jere in Mzimba district, helped by Cibambo's older brother, describes the daily routine of the Paramount and his royal village as they had known it in their youth before the coming of the Europeans:

¶ The *inkosi* had to wash very early before the people came to see him. The *ingceko* was the servant who took care of washing the *inkosi*. He had to go with the *inkosi* to the bush and hide the faeces to prevent any bad person from getting the faeces. The *ingceko* was anyone whom the *inkosi* called for this, and must be one who walks well with the *inkosi*.

Before leaving his house to go to the kraal the *inkosi* had to eat a little porridge. When he went to the kraal a calabash of beer was brought to him. When any beer was brought to the *inkosi*, the *ingceko* tasted it first to see if it was good. The *inkosi* asked 'Is it good beer?' and the *ingceko* said 'Yes *inkosi*' and gave it to the *inkosi* to drink. When the *inkosi* took snuff the big *alumuzana* could beg from him. The other *amadoda* could only touch their noses. Then the *inkosi* knew they were begging snuff from him. Where the *inkosi* sat a mat was spread, and on it was laid a leopard- or a lion-skin. This was called 'the chair of the *inkosi*'. On arrival the big *alumuzana* went straight into the kraal to where the *inkosi* sat and greeted him '*Bayete*', and sat down in front of him.

The *inkosi* could not eat porridge except that cooked by his own wives. In his own hut he ate alone with one wife to serve him. His mothers also came with food every day. He ate twice in his own hut, early and late, and once in the kraal. When he ate in the kraal all could see him. He could

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CHAPTER I

NGONI SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

A BRIEF review was given in Chapter III of Part I of the main elements of Ngoni culture, analysed into 'patterns' covering kinship, village layout, ritual, ceremonial, and language. In this section we shall be considering the principal social institutions embodying Ngoni culture: their clans, houses, families and age sets. We shall find evidence in the two kingdoms of an extensive common element in the social organization which the Ngoni brought with them from the south. Some important diversities will be evident also, such as the variations in virilocal residence found in the central kingdom, and the less widespread practice there of *lobola* marriage. Those elements which were common to Ngoni social organization in both kingdoms were often those which distinguished Ngoni culture from that of the neighbouring peoples. Patrilineal descent, the house system, the ranking of clans, the *laweni* organization of boys' life and activities—these were all distinctively Ngoni, practised by families of Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans, and sometimes adopted by individuals and families of other clans who had been associated with the Ngoni over long periods. Nevertheless, in many of the villages of the central kingdom there were clearly two cultures existing side by side: the Ngoni culture being that of an aristocratic minority and the local culture that of the majority, who in the kingdom were equally subjects of the Paramount but in their villages possessed inferior social status.

Indications were to be seen, even in the more conservative and more isolated northern kingdom, that modern influences were affecting Ngoni social institutions. We have already noticed some of the effects of the cessation of warfare on a social system founded on military traditions. The exodus of young men from Ngoni villages to seek work elsewhere was very extensive, especially in the northern kingdom, where the level of education was higher but employment was not available, and this had repercussions on the age of marriage, the distribution of wealth, and the undertaking of family responsibilities, including the care of the old people. The gradual decline in polygyny, largely but not entirely due to the work of missions, was beginning to have its effects on the working of the house system and on the interrelations of the generations within the family group.

In the 1930's many of these modern changes were appearing but the traditional institutions were still functioning, and the Ngoni leaders themselves were clear about those forms and activities which were distinctively their own.

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182 with men and women of Swazi clans. There were two Ngoni practices
581 which could be regarded as directly contributing to marriage as a
binding process within the society. One was the inheritance of widows
182 by a man's brothers. No formal marriage ceremony took place and if
581 the widow was elderly it was primarily a method of providing for her
587 needs. If she was still capable of bearing children, however, this inheritance ensured that she would continue to produce offspring for the family she had married into, and that her relationship with that family would be maintained. Thus ties which appeared to have been broken by death could be re-established. There were two stages in the reintegration of his widows into a man's family and clan after his death. The first was the ceremony of widows 'seeing their brothers-in-law' after the mourning was at an end, when beer was brewed and they took off and burned their mourning caps. The second was the ceremony of being inherited, when the widows offered snuff to one of their husband's brothers whom they were willing to marry.

182 Another Ngoni practice was that of giving an *nhlansi*, a substitute or
581 additional wife. If, after a marriage had taken place and cattle had been
595 handed over, the wife appeared to be barren, her family might give another daughter as *nhlansi*, without further transfer of cattle, to bear children for her older sister whose house she entered. These children were always referred to as children of the house of A, the earlier married wife, even if they were borne by B, her *nhlansi*. Sometimes, even if the first daughter given in marriage bore children, an *nhlansi* might still be given without additional cattle being transferred, because the bride's family were pleased with her treatment in her husband's village and wished to compliment the man as a good husband.

58 There were four main stages in Ngoni marriage, in all of which the houses played an essential part. The first was the selection of partners and securing the consent of the families; the second the negotiations from the betrothal onwards, centring round the transfer of cattle; the third the series of feasts culminating in the marriage feast itself; and the fourth the assimilation of the new wife into her husband's family, house and village.

584 The selection of a marriage partner might take place in more than one way. There was direct courtship by the man; there was an indicated choice by the girl; there were marriages arranged by the parents; and there was direction of a son by his parents towards a suitable partner.

[582] In addition to clan exogamy and parallel cousin prohibition, there was in pre-European days a prohibition upon marriage between children of age mates in the same village. For girls of Swazi clans marriages were generally arranged, though informants insisted that in most cases the personal preferences of both partners were considered. A young man of a Swazi clan was told that in one village there was X, in another Y, with whom a suitable marriage might be made. Having taken this hint, and

NGONI FAMILY STRUCTURE

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visits or on special occasions. In the central kingdom, where an important man's sisters often married in the village and stayed there, it was evident that they often exercised authority over their brother's children. [594 184]

In polygynous Ngoni families the relationship between siblings was marked by strong attachment. Among the boys in the *laweni* brothers united to protect their younger brothers from other boys, and in the families of Swazi clans brothers showed many signs of youthful intolerance and arrogance towards boys of other clans, especially in matters concerning cattle and their herding. Sibling rivalry among boys was to a large extent controlled by two factors. One was the *laweni* system where the age-set principle predominated. The other was the division into the big house and *gogo* house, where the children of the *gogo* house knew that they stood in a different relationship to succession and authority in the village from their brothers and sisters in the big house. Within the big house itself, sons of the big wife knew that succession was regulated by seniority, and that the eldest son would expect to get priority when he married and it was necessary to allot cattle for *lobola*. The brother-sister link between children of the same mother was, as we have seen, a very close one, especially with the older sister of a man who was heir to a high position. This sister in her relation to his children carried almost the same authority as he did. Among sisters of the same family there was less apparent cohesion, except among very high-ranking Swazi clans where the girl children were looked after by special nursemaids and had their instruction in correct behaviour together from the older woman known as their *gogo*. [561]

Ngoni grandparents on the paternal side showed little of the joking relationship with their grandchildren sometimes associated with this tie. When children went to visit their maternal grandparents in another village there was noticeably more ease between them and more indulgence was shown. In their father's village children were always aware that his parents were persons of standing and authority. Girls over six or seven often slept in their paternal grandmother's hut if she was a widow, and were aware that, though she showed kindness in providing for their needs, she was a firm disciplinarian in all matters of behaviour. 603

Within the family group the male role of leadership was unquestioned. Honour and respect were a man's due from wives as well as from children. In difficult relations within his family, as in the case of divorce, he could count on counsel and support from his brothers, who were also ready to help him if cattle were needed for his own or his son's marriage or for payment of court penalties. This male circle of father and sons, father's brothers and their sons, was a closely knit group which functioned in regulating family affairs and in buying and selling cattle for the house to which they belonged. An obligation to help his sons was recognized by the father of a family and this obligation 562 593

NGONI SOCIETY

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356 was instructed before marriage how to keep these household possessions
593 in good repair, and how to smear the floor and walls of the hut with
cowdung so that they presented the shining surface typical of Ngoni
buildings.

162 The tables which follow show the total population of three villages
585 in each kingdom at the time they were visited in 1938 and 1939, includ-
595 ing such data as the number of widows, of plural marriages, of wives
184 for whom *lobola* was given, and the number of men away at work.

	1 Huts	2 Men	3 Women	4 Children	5 Total	6 Men away	7 Widows	8 Plural marriages	9 Lobola marriages
<i>Northern kingdom</i>									
Eswazini	23	10	21	28	59	10	4	4	21
Endindeni	15	9	21	21	51	4	1	4	15
Eluhangeni	37	19	36	54	109	11	4	5	33
<i>Central kingdom</i>									
Cinkwita	39	22	39	54	115	13	5	4	2
Mangozo	60	41	65	78	184	9	18	2	4
Mcakhatha	122	71	112	68	251	30	16	14	12

Earlier in this chapter reference was made to the patterns of residential grouping on a kinship basis, which had evolved from the mixed tribal groups in the very large villages of pre-European days. The choice of these six villages as examples was made mainly on the grounds that they had a considerable proportion of members of Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans and therefore illustrated the traditional Ngoni pattern of kinship grouping. The northern kingdom villages showed the *lusungulu* and *gogo* pattern still extant. It had disappeared in the central kingdom villages with the result that the villages were much larger, and included groups based on house affiliation which would have been divided into separate villages in the north. On the other hand the sub-division of a village in the central kingdom into *banja* was not found in the north.

592 The data concerning these villages have been analysed to illustrate
614 the households associated with the chief man in the leading clan in the
622 village. These households were those of his wives, his mothers, his
631 brothers, his sons, sisters and daughters. In the north this man was in
one case a *mulumuzana*, in another a son of a great war *induna*, and in
the third the head of a collateral branch of the royal clan. In the central
kingdom the chief man in one was a *mulumuzana*, in another a grandson
of a great war *induna*, and in the third the head of the clan of the
royal shadow. The proportion of households belonging to the leading
clan was much higher in the smaller villages of the north than in the
rest, since they were approximating to a one-family village.

CHILDREN OF THEIR FATHERS

The significance of Ngoni puberty ritual

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We now come back to the question of why the Ngoni held to this private ritual for girls and boys at puberty. There were three main reasons. The first was that each Ngoni child belonged to his or her father's house. At this sign of physical maturity, significant for the boy or girl, and for the society, the elders of the house asserted anew their authority over them, performed a brief traditional ritual, and watched during the ritual for evidence of the Ngoni personality traits of courage and physical endurance which they expected to see in young adults. The second reason was that the change at puberty was regarded as marking only one of the stages in the development of growing boys and girls. It is true it had more significance for girls, in that it set the mature girls apart as a separate group. But it was not the prelude to immediate

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marriage, as the girls' initiation school was among the neighbouring Cewa people; nor was it in old days the prelude for the boys joining the army. The third reason was that the Ngoni did not regard fertility as the major dominant factor in the development of young women, as it undoubtedly was considered among the Cewa. They greatly disliked the ritual and the significance of the Cewa female initiation rites and forbade Ngoni women to have any part in them. Potency among men, on the other hand, was recognized as important both for the individual and for the social group, and impotence, particularly in leading men, was kept secret and hidden from outside knowledge as far as possible. If an Ngoni woman after marriage did not bear children, it was not considered a stigma on her, either individually or socially. The common practice of marrying one of her sisters as a 'substitute', or the very common practice of adoption was resorted to. The latter was always referred to as 'putting a child into the house of So and so'.

One of the alleged objects of initiation schools among other ethnic groups was to instruct the young initiates in correct

contributed by the whole nation, were not found among the Ngoni. 080

Informants are agreed that in the old days young men and women married whom they were told and never attempted to make their own choice against their parents' will. From evidence available this seems to be an oversimplification. It seems likely that individual choice mattered less in those days than it does now, but it cannot have been entirely inoperative. It is said that each regiment of men used to flirt with its corresponding women's regiment, and that marriages sometimes followed. Wiese says that among the aristocratic families a woman had the right to choose her own husband, but that this right was dying out and it was becoming the practice to marry off daughters so as to secure the most marriage cattle and maintain upper-class endogamy.³ It is true that on the evidence of genealogies there do not seem to have been many marriages between very aristocratic women and the most recently captured men, and that therefore we are justified in assuming a tendency towards upper-class endogamy, but this tendency seems not to have been very strong and indeed there never was a clear-cut upper class but instead a method of ranking families in terms of ethnic origin. My informants never suggested that a man would marry his daughter so as to bring in as many cattle as possible, and it seems unlikely that this was ever a common motive.⁴ 584 114 581 565 584 563 581

A girl was expected to be chaste before she was married. From the procedure adopted by the Zulu and from information from other Ngoni groups, it seems likely that girls were examined at marriage to check that they had not been deflowered. Rattray records this among the Ngoni of Southern Nyasaland,⁵ and Read makes a similar statement.⁶ My own informants had such faith in the sexual rectitude of the past as contrasted with the promiscuity of the present that it was difficult to establish what they really thought happened. It seems that unmarried people were allowed intercourse *inter crura* and that this was considered not a violation of chastity. The whole question has been obscured by the conflict of values between the South-Eastern Bantu leaders, whose view appeared to have prevailed at the time, and the recent captives from the Cewa and kindred peoples, who believed that a girl would die if she did not copulate at puberty. We shall see the outcome of this conflict when we come to discuss modern marriage. 836 191 183 177 1578

As might be anticipated in a system in which marriage is a transfer of fertility, a wife was expected to be fertile. If she was barren special procedures were adopted to validate the substance of the marriage. A man could appeal to his wife's relatives for another 842 585

³ Wiese, *op. cit.* 'Expediqao . . .', p. 473 and 'Geschichte . . .', p. 191.

⁴ See below, p. 120.

⁵ Rattray, *Some folk-lore stories and songs in Chinyanja, with English translation and notes*, S.P.C.K., 1907, p. 115.

⁶ Margaret Read, 'The Moral code of the Ngoni and their former military state', *Africa*, xi (1938), p. 6.

842 woman, who was sometimes a younger sister or a junior father's
595 daughter. This woman then became a linked co-wife (*nkhamzi*)²
subordinate to her barren sister. If the linked wife was also barren
then the man could demand another one. The barren woman was
never sent back to her own relatives but continued to live with her
husband. Children of the linked wife were allocated to her and she
became responsible for their upbringing. Similarly if a wife died
before she had borne a child a linked co-wife replaced her.

587 If the man was sterile he used to arrange for a friend to sleep
842 secretly with his wife so that she should conceive. The friend was
837 rewarded with a beast after a child had been born but the reason
for making the reward was kept secret. If a seedraiser was caught
he was killed for committing adultery, despite the fact of his having
been called in by the husband.³

837 As well as being fertile, wives were expected to be chaste. On
684 this point the evidence is clear. Wiese states that adulterers were
always killed;⁴ all subsequent writers have agreed with him. I
was told that if the woman's husband was not an important person
he was sometimes placated with a present of cattle. If the husband
persisted in referring the matter to the chief the senior lieutenants
of the chief might intercede on his behalf, if this was the man's
first offence. Otherwise the man and the woman were both killed
by one of the senior lieutenants.

572 The approved mode of behaviour for women was chastity before
[831] marriage, submission in the choice of husband, and fertility and
fidelity in marriage. These obligations were clear-cut and definite
and of universal applicability. The obligations of affines towards
602 one another were not so straightforward, and their fulfilment was
a process marked by ritual transfers of cattle and carefully prescribed
modes of behaviour. In particular the relationship of a man to his
606 wife's mother was altered progressively from one of strict avoidance
to openly expressed friendliness. The stages in the process represented
the gradual acceptance of the man into the family of his wife's
parents as a son-in-law, the father of their daughter's children.

586 Marriage was entered into without compulsion on either side, but
[584] the right to terminate it was held in the man's group alone. A
woman could not on any ground secure a divorce. All my informants
agreed on this point. A man could divorce his wife at any time by
sending her back to her own kinsfolk, giving her a small present as
an indication that he had divorced her. If he had offered bridewealth
for her, her kinsfolk were under an obligation to provide him with a

² Read, in her 'Moral code', p. 18 translates this word (*nkhamzi*) as 'substitute'. Lancaster, 'Tentative chronology', p. 79, gives the word as *nkhamzi*. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 39 translates the Swazi word *inkhamzi* as 'subordinate co-wife'. I have chosen the translation 'linked co-wife' as there are other kinds of subordinate co-wife who are not *nkhamzi*, and some *nkhamzi* are not substitutes.

³ See below, p. 34.

⁴ Wiese, op. cit. 'Expéditions . . .', p. 471, and 'Geschichte . . .', pp. 189-90.

643 The Chief did however interfere to some extent in the marriages of those near him and on occasion took away a wife from one man and gave her as wife to another. Nsingu, the heir of Mpezeni I, once took a wife from one of the important men in his mother's royal village and made her his queen. [762] The man committed suicide and Nsingu killed a beast to placate the anger of his mother's lieutenants. Such instances of intervention seem to have been rare and were disliked by the common people.

6. Polygyny

592 The pattern of growth of the residential system was determined by the grouping of children in the compound family. This grouping was in turn determined by the ranking of wives. It seems that the South-Eastern Bantu system of dividing wives into three groups, a great house and a left- and a right-hand house was not continued. Old men are agreed that in the past wives could be described as either left-hand or right-hand, but there is no agreement on the principles of this division. In discussing the wives of well-known men who flourished about this period, there was no consensus about which women were left-hand wives and which were right. The division cannot in any case have had the same spatial reference to the husband's cattle byre as among the South-Eastern Bantu, since the Ngoni lived in large villages with a central byre containing all the cattle of the village.

[361] Wives were arranged into small groups which we may term 595 'bands'. A band might contain up to a dozen co-wives and was 592 under the charge of its senior member. Wives in a band lived close to each other in the same cluster of huts. A man might have as many as five or six bands of wives, and the senior wife of one of the bands was the man's great wife, the mother of his heir. We have seen that a cross-cousin was inferior to an unrelated wife, and a wife from the same or related village inferior to one from afar. These two considerations, however, seem only to have influenced a man's choice of senior wives and did not themselves directly determine wifely rank. Thus a man could if he wished make a cross-cousin from his own village his great wife or the senior wife of one of his bands, but most men did not do so. The first wife married with bridewealth was the great wife. If there was a wife married earlier for whom no bridewealth had been paid, perhaps a cross-cousin or a recently captured woman, then she became subordinate to the chief wife and was regarded as a member of her band. Wives married subsequently were attached to this band until the husband decided to start another band. He took either one of the wives of his great wife's band or else a newly acquired wife, and established a new cluster of huts for her. Some other members of the great wife's band might be transferred to the new band, as subordinates of the newly promoted wife. As the man continued to take new wives they were allocated to one or other of the existing bands. If the husband was an important man he allocated to each

band one or more of his lieutenants and other dependent families. Thus the band of wives formed the core round which the sub-segments of the husband's residential segment were built up. Each band was associated with a distinct cluster of huts, although not every cluster of huts had a band of wives living in it. The division of wives into bands was only one of the processes by which the segmentation of clusters was carried on.

Each linked co-wife lived in the band of her barren senior although occasionally a linked co-wife was promoted and made head of her own band. The children of a linked co-wife were spoken of as being born in the house of her senior, but here the word 'house' (*ng'anda*) was used only in a figurative sense.²¹ Where it was necessary to contrast the children of the wives of one band with the children of another, they were called the children of the head of the band. Less frequently all a man's children by his several wives were referred to as the children of the house of his great wife.

It seems that more trouble was taken to obtain a linked co-wife for a barren great wife or head of a band than for a junior wife. A great wife needed children to ratify her position in the hierarchy of co-wives, and to establish a line of descendants senior to the lines springing from her subordinates. Barrenness was the principal reason for seeking a linked co-wife but it is said that if a man had pleased his wife's father, a linked co-wife might be given spontaneously by his father-in-law as a mark of his esteem. When a wife grew old and needed domestic help a linked co-wife was sometimes given to her although she might have borne many children. A man was under an obligation to offer one beast²² to his wife's father when he received a linked co-wife.

The children of a linked co-wife ranked immediately after the children by her senior, if there were any. They inherited the property allocated to her hut and belonged to the segment founded by her.

7. The levirate

The custom of linking co-wives was sometimes a kind of sororal polygyny and sometimes a variety of sororate. We may see it as a device for establishing and maintaining the residential segment potentially founded by the senior co-wife when she married her husband. Similarly we may look on the levirate as a way of ensuring that the fertility of the woman still remained attached to that same segment even after the death of her husband. A widow lived in leviratic marriage with her husband's younger brother who became

²¹ Compare the similar use of the word 'house' among the Zulu and 'room' among the Tallensi. Cf. Hoernlé, 'Social organization' in *The Bantu-speaking Tribes of South Africa*, p. 78, and Fortes, *The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi*, pp. 198 sqq.

²² Called variously *meeha* or *mtoso*. *Meeha* is an Nsenga word meaning a small cloth worn round the waist by women. The allusion is to the labour pains felt by the mother of the new bride which were eased by binding her waist with a cloth. *Mtoso* has the same meaning in the old Ngoni language.

made with the approval of the dead man's kin. Although by this arrangement the woman was for a while removed from her allotted place in the system, the *status quo ante* was restored with the return of the children to their pater's kinsmen. 587 [851]

8. Segmentation

The primary cleavage among a man's children was between the children of one band and the children of another. Within a band, the division was into separate 'houses'. Where there were children of more than one mother in the same 'house', that is where the senior wife as well as the linked wife had borne children or where there was more than one fertile linked co-wife with the same senior, the division was between the groups of full siblings. These lines of cleavage were expressed spatially by the arrangements of the huts belonging to each segment. At the top of the political hierarchy, the arrangement of the Paramount Chief's queens determined the major divisions into which the nation was split residentially, with a senior queen in charge of each major royal village, and lesser queens in charge of politically dependent royal villages. At the bottom, the man with two or three wives saw his sons group themselves round their mothers while retaining a common allegiance to him. 595 592 644 631 593

Thus we see that in 'the time of peace' marriage was tied to a clear-cut residential system based on patrilineal descent and virilocal residence, modified by political status deriving ultimately from the Paramount Chief. The position of males in this system was determinate, although not unalterable. By the processes of marriage males were supplied with legitimate offspring. Although descent and succession were traced through males, the pattern of segmentation of this patrilineal system was determined by the organization of wives. The relative status of co-wives was perpetuated in the relationship between the segments which sprang from them. 182 562

In this system the elementary family of man, wife, and children did not emerge as an important grouping. In all serious enterprises a person derived support from his male agnates, and it was to the organized kin that the fertility of the woman was transferred by the payment of bridewealth. By the time a man had advanced in status sufficiently to be head of a division or a village, he had acquired many dependants who were not true kinsmen and his wives had been divided into bands. With the recently captured families, these considerations did not apply with quite the same force, for there were many poor men who had only one wife. These people depended on their political superior for cattle, and the women were to some extent under the control of his great wife, in so far as agricultural work and beer brewing were concerned. Even the rearing of children once they had been weaned was carried on outside the elementary family. Children were sent to their grandmother's house to be trained and indoctrinated with Ngoni values. The recent captives 594 613 554 855 [849] [603] ORD

581 on the one hand; acquire that custody without undertaking any of these symbolic acts, and on the other hand he may have full rights over his wife without ever getting control of his children.

2. Choice

582 Marriage involves choice and selection. There are prescribed 'preferential marriages' in the usual terminology, but as applied to the Ngoni this nomenclature is misleading, for, as in the old days, a woman who marries her cross-cousin does not have such high status in her husband's compound family as a wife who is not related to her husband. A man behaves in some respects towards his female cross-cousins as though they were his wives or potential wives, but it is incorrect to say that Ngoni men prefer to marry their cross-

Table III. Marital status of males by age, 1948-9

Age in years	Marital Status								Total	
	Unwedded	Wedded						Total wedded men		
		Number of wives				Total wedded men				
		0		1	2		3			Not known
		Divorced men	Widowers							
0-4	51	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	51	
5-9	61	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	61	
10-14	55	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	55	
15-19	28	1	-	2	-	-	-	3	31	
20-24	14	-	-	6	-	-	-	6	20	
25-29	-	2	-	13	-	-	1	16	16	
30-34	-	1	-	7	-	-	-	8	8	
35-39	-	-	-	13	3	1	-	17	17	
40-44	-	-	-	4	2	2	-	8	8	
45-49	-	-	-	8	-	-	1	9	9	
50-54	-	1	-	4	-	-	1	6	6	
55-59	-	-	-	8	1	-	1	10	10	
60-64	-	-	-	9	2	-	-	11	11	
65-69	-	1	1	6	1	1	-	10	10	
70-74	-	1	-	1	1	-	-	3	3	
75-79	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	2	2	
Not known	-	-	-	1	-	-	6	7	7	
Total	200	7	1	83	11	4	10	116	325	

Case History 1

Amos^{*} was married to Eve and wished to offer bridewealth for her. Amos's father prevented him, saying that the marriage of Amos's sister with Eve's father's son had not yet proved a success and he did not want at this stage to bind himself any further to Eve's kinsfolk.

There are no exogamous clans among the Ngoni but sometimes an agnatic lineage has a distinctive descent-name, giving it the appearance of an exogamous clan. Kinship terms are used within the lineage and members may not marry one another. As, however, descent is not usually traced, either actually or putatively, beyond the grandparents of adults these exogamous groupings are small and do not persist in time.

Tribal preferences are not marked. In the past the Ngoni were prepared to capture and incorporate into their society anyone who came in their path. At the same time there was an association of South-Eastern Bantu origin with high rank, although this was never developed into a rigid system of ethnic ranking. Nowadays Ngoni live in the midst of people from other tribes, in the adjacent reserves, on the tobacco farms, in Fort Jameson township and at the urban centres. A man may sometimes be ridiculed if he marries a Cewa girl but many men do so, particularly if they live in Cewa-speaking villages under Ngoni chiefs. Wealthy Cewa men from Cewa chiefdoms who wish to bequeath their property to their sons sometimes marry Ngoni women and offer bridewealth for them, hoping thereby to prevent their sister's sons disputing the inheritance. There are many men on farms and in the township coming from distant areas whose tribe may be uncertain or unknown but who manage to marry Ngoni girls. The only strong antagonism is against the Nyasaland Yao. Yao find it difficult to marry into aristocratic Ngoni families and even when they do their rights are never certain. The Yao are regarded by the Ngoni as clever sorcerers and are thought to have an excess of sexual vigour.

A few women become the concubines of European or Indian men. Such unions lack much of the substance of marriage, although the man sometimes makes a present to the woman's relatives which is interpreted as a marriage payment. These men are not usually concerned with establishing the validity of the marriage, if marriage it is. They cannot take action against their wives in the Native Courts, nor can they hope for redress in the Administration's courts. Although the Administration assists women to secure maintenance of the children, it does not recognize these unions as legal marriages. In vernacular speech they are referred to as marriages and, despite the protestations in recent years of more sophisticated Africans, these women are not despised in the rural areas. A woman who

* All personal names in this paper are fictitious. I have used Biblical names as these are common among the Ngoni. Where an individual is mentioned in more than one case history I have retained the same fictitious name throughout.

lives for some years with a European may leave him and enter into a proper marriage. The favourite wife of a chief who died a few years ago had earlier been the mistress of a European.

Christians must abide by the rules of their church or risk ecclesiastical censure. A baptized Catholic man may marry only a Catholic girl or he will be suspended from receiving the sacraments. A Catholic woman must either marry a baptized Catholic or obtain dispensation to marry a catechumen. A catechumen of either sex can marry another catechumen or a pagan. In addition Catholics cannot marry if the marriage would infringe canon law. Catholic cross-cousins, therefore, can marry only by concealing their relationship from the priest. In the Dutch Reformed Church a baptized person, or a member of a class of instruction, cannot marry a pagan or a Catholic without being suspended. Other missions have similar rules.

Locality is of some importance in influencing a man's choice. The bigger the village he lives in the more likely he is to take a wife from within it, but the belief still persists that it is better to find a wife from outside one's own village if possible. In a polygynous household a wife married from her husband's own village still does not rank as high as one who has been brought in from outside, of whom it is said 'her husband had to walk to get her'. The mechanisms by which people living in different villages are brought into contact are numerous,⁴ but for finding a spouse the two most important are inter-village dance contests and visits to relatives. Teams of young people, usually all girls and young women, go from their own village to others in the vicinity to dance against the home teams. Young men stand around watching them and discuss among themselves the erotic possibilities of individual dancers. As darkness falls the dancers start back home, escorted by the young men who flirt with them on the way. At the weekends there are many young men back in the villages from their employment on the farms or in Fort Jameson and they sometimes gather into gangs of half-a-dozen or so, wandering from village to village in their best clothes, with dark glasses and walking sticks, looking at the girls' dances and trying to make assignations. This sort of flirtation is confined to the young and irresponsible, and it would be regarded as unseemly for a middle-aged man to pay much attention to the dances of young girls.

More respectable contacts are made by young people who go off to stay with their relatives in distant villages. Everyone has kinsmen and affines in many different villages, and it is the custom to visit back and forth for weeks at a time. A young man may go on several days journey to visit his relatives among the Cewa and Naenga tribes, or to live for a while with a relative working on a distant farm. While he is away, he may meet a girl whom he likes, and arrange to marry her. The dance situation does not provide

⁴ Cf. Barnes, op. cit. pp. 214 ff

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apparent ease with which women get divorces and councillors say that they divorce people only because the Administration would interfere if they did not. We can see that in one sense the Ngoni analysis is correct. Whatever may be the precipitating causes of particular divorces, one basic factor is that the old social order in which divorce was rare has been replaced, through a series of events beginning with the White conquest, by a different form of social structure in which wives are relatively mobile from one husband to another. Adultery and desertion lead to divorce because it is no longer necessary to tie down the fertility of women to definite points in a segmentary system based on patrilineal descent, and this is so because the system no longer exists. It is true that the Roman Catholic and Anglican Missions do not recognize divorce but ecclesiastical ceremonies have no force in law, either in the eyes of the Administration or of the Native Courts, and the sanctions utilized by these missions do not entirely prevent their members seeking divorce.

Immediately after a divorce the couple usually wish to have little to do with one another. After the passage of years the hostility between them fades away and they may talk to one another in the ordinary course of village life. They continue to address each other as *husband* and *wife* and their children, although nominally in the custody of one group or the other continue to visit back and forth and keep the parents informed of each other's doings. A woman now married elsewhere may return to her former husband when their son comes home on leave from work. In her old age a woman may even go back to the man from whom she was divorced a long time ago if she has no one else to turn to for shelter and assistance. More frequently she follows her children to where they are living in her former husband's village but has little to do with him directly, only through their children.

8. Co-wives

We have seen that the rights of a man over his wife's sexual activities are different from hers over his. Whereas a woman who commits adultery pays damages to her husband, he does not pay her when he commits adultery. This lack of symmetry derives from the polygynous nature of the Ngoni marriage system. A man can always argue that he is seeking another wife, even if the woman he is running after is married to someone else. It is considered no business of his wife to interfere. She may attempt to stop him but all she can use are domestic and mystical sanctions, she cannot appeal to the law. Again, a wife has no right to the sexual monopoly of her husband and cannot prevent him from taking additional wives except by making his life with her so difficult that he decides to abandon the attempt.

As can be seen from Table III, about one man in seven has two or more wives. Although the Christian Missions do not tolerate

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794 polygyny, and punish their members who take additional wives, there are still a number of Christian polygynists who for most purposes align themselves with the Christian group.

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[583] As in the old days, the wives of a polygynist are ranked in the chronological order of marriage, the first wife married being the great wife. If, however, bridewealth has been paid, the wives married in this way are all senior to those who are married without it. The arrangement by which a barren or aged wife was given a linked co-wife (*nshanzi*) has now almost disappeared. A young girl may still be indicated as a linked co-wife designate at the gall bladder ceremony of her kinswoman and the intestines placed round her neck, but this is now a mere ceremonial, and the girl marries elsewhere when she grows up. As mentioned above a chief negotiated recently for a linked co-wife on the strength of bridewealth paid by his father, but with no success.

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595 A man makes his headquarters in his great wife's hut, and keeps his possessions and money in it. During the day it is considered proper that he should sit and chat or entertain visitors on the verandah of her hut. Her hut is likely to be of better design than those of her co-wives, and she is more likely than they to have a separate kitchen. When her husband returns from a journey, he ought to go first to her hut, and if he has brought back goods from Southern Rhodesia, it is in her house that he stores his loads until he has time to divide them among his wives and relatives. A visitor from afar goes first to the great wife's hut and there asks for the man he is seeking. In her husband's absence it is she who must entertain the visitor. This pattern of precedence is followed to greater or lesser extent despite quarrels between husband and wife, and is not affected by where the husband actually sleeps at night.

595 Apart from this emphasis on the importance of the great wife, the correct behaviour for a man with many wives is impartiality. He must sleep with each wife in rotation, usually for a week at a time, and must not confide in one wife the secrets of his relationship to another. Relationships between co-wives are sometimes strained, and one may use medicines against the others. The medicine²⁹ [830] believed to prevent a man from achieving erection with anyone other than the woman who gives it to him is sometimes used by one wife against another. On the other hand, some co-wives help each other in their gardens and many polygynists' households run smoothly. Each wife has her own hut and her own garden and it is possible for them to arrange their affairs so that they can co-operate or act separately as they find best. If they persistently quarrel [591] their husband may deem it well for them to live in separate villages, so that for example a man may live virilocally with his great wife and uxorilocally with his second wife, going from one village to the

²⁹ Possibly known as *ndamanga*. The details of this medicine are not known by many men, and I was unable to question any women on this matter.

other for a week at a time. Men working permanently in the township or with trading stores in strange villages take one wife at a time with them, and there is a change round every month. 595

It is the newcomer to a group of wives who is likely to be the target of hostility. The other co-wives sometimes combine to make life so difficult for her and their husband that he may decide to abandon the idea of marrying her. One way out of this situation is to go off to a farm or to Fort Jameson township. The couple live there until the man's other wives have calmed down and accepted the inevitable. When the arrival of a new co-wife is agreed to by the old wives she is expected to live in peace with them. They take part in her gall-bladder ceremony and instruct her in her duties as a wife. The kind of sentiments expressed by a woman to her new co-wife are illustrated in the following speech.

Case history 3

Jehu had two wives and had just married another. The new bride, who came from Ishmael village, arrived at Jehu's village for her gall bladder ceremony. She was instructed by many people including Jehu's great wife, who said

'I am the great wife of Jehu and I have a co-wife married to the same husband. We have never quarrelled since we were married to Jehu. Perhaps you will be the first to start quarrelling in our home. If you are a quarrelsome person, when you go back to your home today, go and leave it [your quarrelsomeness] there and come back here with a good heart. Women who are married to one husband ought to love one another and sit together without backbiting. We have never held a meeting in this village because of a quarrel between us two [co-wives]. Leave all your jealousy at your home in Ishmael village and do not bring it here.'

and widows are subject to the same restrictions and wear the same signs of mourning whether or not their deceased husbands made any payments. The absence of payments does not automatically deny to a man and woman the status of husband and wife any more than the completed payments automatically ensure marital happiness.

As reflected in Table XII, the proportion of marriages in which no payments are offered has decreased in the last twelve years, and we know from Table VIII that this is due to an increase in the number of marriages in which the legalization payment is made. It is therefore possible in future there will be a clearer division between marriage, with its legalization payment, and concubinage, with no such payment and with a completely different relationship between the sexual partners and between their respective groups of relatives. We are not in this paper concerned specifically with concubinage and prostitution, but it may at this point be useful to point out that not many women are concubines. In our sample, as set out in Table IV, there was only one concubine, a wedded woman, among 223 wedded women. From Table III, we see that there were no men at all, in our sample of 116 wedded men, living with concubines. The paramour of the concubine in our sample was resident on a nearby farm, and so did not come into the sample of men.

4. Co-operation between affines

The payments and ceremonies of marriages are isolated and memorable events. The ceremonies are public in that neighbours

Table XII. Incidence of marriage without payment, by decades

Marriage payment	Date of marriage									Total
	1878-87	1888-97	1898-1907	1908-17	1918-27	1928-37	1938-47	1948-9	Not known	
At least one payment offered	1	6	17	37	38	34	86	14	5	238
None offered ..	-	7	11	19	26	24	29	3	3	122
Ratio of marriages without offer of payment to total	0%	54%	39%	34%	41%	41%	25%	18%	—	34%
Not known if any payments offered	1	3	6	6	12	11	18	7	2	66
Grand total ..	2	16	34	62	76	69	133	24	10	426

Informants as in Table VIII

Administrative ruling that no new village could be started without a minimum of ten taxpayers, and earlier it was the policy of the Administration to decrease the number of independent villages. These policies have now changed, and throughout the period there have always been devices for lessening their effect, but it is still true that sometimes the easiest way for a man to flee from his kinsmen is to build his hut in his wife's village. 648
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Case history 14

Samuel's father was headman of a village. Samuel¹⁴ married in the village and had four sons by his wife before she died. His second wife lived with him virilocally and after she had borne two children she committed adultery with one of Samuel's elder brothers. Samuel divorced her and married a third wife who died soon after. Samuel accused his brothers of killing his first and third wives by sorcery. He married a fourth wife and went to live in her village, taking with him his four sons by his first wife and the elder child by his second wife. He is still registered at his father's village and attends there whenever the District Officer tours the area, but he has little to do with his brothers. [554]

In this way the movements of men and women between villages reflect the struggles between kinsfolk and between affines. Besides the formation of new villages, which goes on despite obstacles placed in the way, there is a continual reshuffling of the elements making up the existing villages. Through marriage a man acquires affines and through them places where he can live if he wants to do so. This change in the structure of the village is therefore related to the new role of villages in the administrative scheme, the new rules for their formation, and the new kinds of movement from one village to another. By reason of his marriages the number of moves that a man can make if need be is increased. 591
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3. Polygyny

The other important structural change that has been directly related to external influences is the decreased incidence of polygyny. In the old days a man acquired dependants in two ways, by begetting them and by capturing them. Wealth consisted of cattle and dependants, and the well-remembered names of the past are those of patriarchs with dozens of wives whose offspring now form the core of many villages. Nowadays the missions oppose polygyny, wealth can be acquired in other ways than by the marriage of daughters, and a variety of relatives with different genealogical ties can be gathered round one as dependants. It is rare to find a man with as many as five wives. With the decline in polygyny the system of ranking that was used to organize large compound households has fallen into decay, and except when the issue has been complicated by the payment of bridewealth, wives are simply ranked in chronological order of marriage. With the increased importance 595
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[556]
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¹⁴ See genealogy, p. 81.

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 595 of maternal ties, the cleavage between sets of father's children is an
 178 expression more of their different matrilineal affiliations than of
 N
 1855 the different status of their mothers. A child will be sent to its
 own mother's mother rather than to its father's wife's mother,
 although some children do go to the latter. Samuel's children by
 his first and third wives^a were reared by their father's fourth wife's
 mother, but they maintain contact with their own mothers' relatives.

These particular structural changes have taken place without
 any great conflict of values. It would appear that although polygyny
 was an essential feature of the old system, there was no idea that it
 was wrong to remain monogamous. Indeed in any community with
 a normal sex ratio, the majority of men must be monogamists and
 it is not surprising that monogamy is tolerated however much
 polygyny is the goal of ambitious men. Among the Ngoni the
 decline in polygyny over the last fifty years has not outraged
 traditional values. In like manner, we have seen that traditionally
 a man's mother and his wife's mother should share the rearing of
 N
 855 his children. This division is in accord with the statement made
 183 frequently by aristocratic Ngoni that when distributing gifts a
 man ought not to favour his own parents more than his wife's.
 Both these injunctions indicate that even in 'the time of peace',
 however clearly a man's children by a wife for whom he had paid
 bridewealth belonged to his group and not to hers, the claims of a
 wife's kinsfolk and their interest in the children of the marriage
 were recognized. Ngoni say that children ought to live in their
 father's village, but this is a statement of the same order as the oft-
 reiterated remark that the Ngoni pay bridewealth. Ngoni make
 these statements because these are part of the index of their tribal
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 591 identity, not because they have observed them to be true. The
 177 facility with which married couples live uxori locally is no doubt
 partly due to the influence of the matrilineal uxori local Cewa and
 other tribes, but we cannot regard this as the only operative factor.

N M 836 4. The moral significance of sexual activity 177

In the treatment of sexual activity in girls there does appear to
 be a certain moral dilemma. We have observed that the Cewa
 believed that a girl who did not copulate at puberty would die,
 and that the Ngoni held that a girl should be chaste until she was
 married, which was some time after puberty. The seclusion of
 girls was, and is, a matter arranged by women and one in which
 men have very little say. It may be on this account that the Cewa
 view has largely prevailed, for the Ngoni took many women captives
 and in the early stages of the migration from Natal there seem to
 have been more Ngoni men than women. The women were not so
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 562 carefully indoctrinated into the Ngoni way of life as were men
 177 captives, for the women's regimental system was never as highly

^a See above, p. 109

varying success in their other aims. The number of people with dozens of wives has decreased to zero, but this has been due to the operation of other factors as well as pressure from the missions. Whether the incidence of polygyny as a whole, that is the ratio of monogamist to polygynist men, has decreased is difficult to assess, since genealogical information is incomplete on barren wives and the wives of men whose descendants are now scattered. The fact that only six per cent of widows are inherited is due to the general change in the nature of marriage, the decline in the incidence of bridewealth, and the changed significance of residence, as well as to Christian endeavour. In these matters the general flow of events has been on the side of the missions. The same cannot be said for premarital copulation and for the ritual of 'taking up the child'. Censure from the mission is an additional hazard to be avoided in premarital intercourse, but it has not prevented it. In their opposition to the belief in *mdulo* and the ritual intercourse which follows as a consequence of the belief, the missions are aided by the teaching of hygiene and Western science in the schools, but there is no support from indigenous values. In this matter it is difficult to establish any trend, but the way in which attitudes are changing towards traditional mystical sanctions seems to be that the operation of the sanction is still believed in, but that the techniques for counteracting the sanction have been added to, so that the powerful medicines of Western civilization, particularly the sulphonamides, can be used to counteract the machinations of sorcerers. It does not seem likely that the belief in *mdulo* will disappear easily. [197] [595] [587] [836] 854 177 [278]

Thus in the system of values sustaining marriage, we find that there is some inconsistency. The teaching of the missions, the values associated with the old Ngoni way of life, and those deriving from the matrilineal tribes of the region conflict with one another on some points and support each other at others. The situations of the present day provide for considerable freedom of choice within these conflicting traditions, so that in one situation a man may adhere to the mission teaching in condemning the bigamy of another man in his village, and in another situation take part in the marriage negotiations for an additional wife for his chief, in accordance with the old Ngoni system of values. A man condones the secret lovers of his unmarried daughter, but when she becomes pregnant brings them to court with the approval of the mission. 581 177 182

6. The transfer of rights

The rights transferred from one group to the other by marriage payments in the old system were clearly defined. By the payment of 'snuff-box' the man's patrilineal kin group acquired rights in *uxorem* in the woman, and by the bridewealth they acquired rights in *genetricem*.⁴ If the woman committed adultery after 'snuff-box' 583 593 613

⁴ I have taken these terms from the interesting paper by Mrs. Bohannan on 'Dahomean marriage: a revaluation', *Africa*, xix (1949), p. 278 to indicate rights in a woman as wife and as mother respectively.

12. Customary Liames (Ngoni).

Pre-marital intercourse was strictly forbidden, but it is now the general practice, though disapproved of by the elders. While rarely claimed, it is still possible for a father to obtain damages from a man who is proved to have had connexion with his young unmarried daughter; and the bride-price is reduced when it is known that a girl has been playing fast and loose as a regular habit.

13. Dissolution of Marriage (Ngoni).

Connubial disputes are decided at the husband's village. A wife may not be divorced on account of barrenness; but in such a case her father gives the husband a younger sister without further *mboko*, or arranges with a friend or relation to give his daughter in return for a smaller bride-price.

When a divorce has been granted, it is made effective by the husband's *sankhosu* taking the wife home and handing her back to her father. If there are no children, the bride-price is returned, together with the *mboko*, *lutenduru* and other presents made before marriage. Presents made by husband to wife after marriage are considered to be the woman's own property, and she takes them with her. If there are several children, the husband keeps them, and his father-in-law retains the bride-price. If there is only one child, and the bride-price was large, the husband keeps the child and also receives back a portion of the bride-price, the guiding principle being a fair division. When the father is absent and is entitled to the children, his relations take charge of them. But even though the father may be given legal ownership, neither Angoni nor Achewa ever take small children away from their mother, with whom they must remain "until they are able to understand," the father being allowed meanwhile to visit them from time to time.

III.—DOMESTIC LIFE: FILIAL.

1. Infancy.

Among the Achewa, twins were never killed. After being washed in medicine, they were taken with a present of a goat to the chief, who thereupon gave them their names. Until that was done, the chief could not visit their village. At night one twin sleeps on each side of the mother, who lies on her back. If one of them dies young, it is buried with a fruit of the "sausage tree" (*Figelia pinnata*), so that it may not be lonely. Formerly, twin girls married the same man at the same time, and twin brothers married their first wives at the same time.

Guardianship of a child is always vested in the father until initiation, when it passes to the *mboko*, and on his death to the mother's other brothers, and then to the mother's sons.

Among the Angoni, the father is always guardian, with the modification that after marriage a girl must obey her husband before all others. When the father is dead, the father's brothers succeed according to age, then the father's sons in order, and then the sons of the father's brothers in their order.

THE VILLAGE

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children, but it is unusual to find more than two adults living in the same hut. These may be either man and wife, or two women who are unmarried or whose husbands are away. Adolescent boys sleep in dormitories containing a number of boys, and there are similar huts for girls. Smaller children sleep with whoever is responsible for their upbringing, parents, grandparents, or other relative, as the case may be. Children in fact sleep in a variety of huts, sometimes with their elders and sometimes with one group of playmates, sometimes with another. Polygynists divide their time between their several wives, although they may tend to keep their belongings in the hut of their chief wife. Men do not as a rule possess huts of their own apart from those of their wives.

The hut is said to belong to the man or woman living in it. There is a tendency to refer to the man as the owner if the marriage is patrilocal and to the woman if it is matrilocal, but this is not an invariable rule, and the builder of the hut, who may be living elsewhere, may be referred to as the owner. About half the dwelling huts have kitchens near by, separate huts of similar construction which are used for cooking and as sleeping-places for children and visitors. When there is no separate kitchen, cooking is done inside the dwelling hut or on the veranda.

The village, then, is a collection of buildings of different types, in which people sleep and keep their possessions, animals are sheltered, and food stored. We must now consider how the inhabitants of the village are organized.

Structure

Royal villages have names in the Ngoni language that were given by their founders. For example, there is a regal village founded by Singu, the eldest son of Mpezeni I, called Ngalsaweni, meaning 'dormitory', as it was there that he put his wives. These villages are also sometimes referred to by the name of the senior queen for whom they were founded.

Most commoner villages, however, do not possess names of this type, and are known only by descent-names or by the names of individuals. These are usually the name and descent-name of the founder of the village, the man who first established the village as a separate unit. It is this individual name that is used to refer to the present headman of the village, the man recognized by the chief and the Administration as responsible for the village. This office is hereditary,

TENTATIVE CHRONOLOGY OF THE NGONI, GENEALOGY OF THEIR CHIEFS, AND NOTES.

By D. GORDON LANCASTER.

NOTE OF INTRODUCTION.

THESE tentative notes relating to the Ngoni are the result of many years of research amongst the natives in the Eastern Province of N. Rhodesia, with whom I have been in constant contact, firstly as a Government official and secondly as a friend. I have received the greatest assistance and courtesy from the Paramount Chief, Mpenzi Jere II, and I am further indebted to A. K. Jere, a son of old Chief Kapalamoyo Jere, without whose knowledge, assistance and tactful handling of the old indunas these notes and genealogy would never have been completed. 101
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NOTES.

(1) Zongendaba (Zwangendaba, Uzwangendaba) Kumalo, son of Hlathwayo of the Ngoni tribe and his wife, Mquamache Nzima, was born near St. Lucia Bay in 1780 circa. 159
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Zongendaba, when a young man, appears to have shown great promise as a military leader. Hlathwayo, his father, and Ziwide, uncle of his wife, Losiawa Nqumayo, appear to have been close neighbours and friends, and with other local clans for some time resisted Tshaka. The date of Hlathwayo's death is not known, but Zongendaba broke away from the district or tribal area with a large following, after the second attack by Tshaka on the Ndwandwe Tribe, whom the Ngoni were assisting. Malilikazi, a younger member of the Kumalo, after this defeat served Tshaka as an Induna for approximately two years, during which time his bravery and leadership, under the eye of Tshaka, brought him promotion. Zongendaba and Gwasa Tole broke away with a following in the year 1823; Malilikazi followed towards the end of the year 1828.

In the same year, 1825, Boschangane, known as Manukusa, son of Sigode and a cousin of Zongendaba's wives, Losiawa and Soera, broke away with a following of Ama-Ndwanwe and entered into Tongaland, Portuguese East Africa, through Swasiland. It is stated by native authorities that Zongendaba had with him girls and young women but no matrons, that they were few in number, that the Ama-Swazi were raided for cattle and suitable young girls, and that these were taken along with them on their northern migration through Tongaland and Lourenco Marques. [521]

It is definitely stated that the following wives accompanied Zongendaba from their tribal area: Losiawa and Soera. These women were daughters of Nombhengula, brother of Ziwide and son of Langa Vimba. Nombhengula was a brother of Ziwide and not as is sometimes stated a son. [595] ●

1 [Induna = military leader -- Analyst]

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migration about 1833; her burial place is unknown. She died without issue. She was the eldest daughter of Nombhengula, who was a brother of Ziwide and Sigode, and a son of Langa Vinba Nqumayo. She was a cousin to Manukusa, son of Sigode, and to Nompetu, daughter of Ziwide, who married Matshobana, the father of Mzilikazi. Sometimes it happens that a great wife or other major wife is not blessed with children. In these cases another woman is placed in her "house" with the object of raising seed to it. The children resulting are looked upon as children of the establishment in which their mother was "placed" and are in the same position as if born to the major wife; the eldest son of a chief's "Great Wife" inherits the chieftainship of the tribe on the death of his father. This was, and is, the custom of the Ngoni; it is also known to the Achewa and Ansega Tribes. This custom is known to the Ngoni as *Nkhlanze*.

Zongendaba therefore took as *Nkhlanze* Soera Nqumayo, a younger sister of Lotiwa, and by her he had issue as follows:—Ntutu Mpezeni, the eldest son, "the Inkosana of the Indhunkulu," Jadose, Mtwalalichi, and Ndhlobvu Makekavu. Soera was born about 1808 near St. Lucia Bay. She migrated with the chief and followed him through all his wanderings until his death, after which she accompanied her son and heir, Ntutu Mpezeni, into what is now the Fort Jameson district. There she settled in her village called "Dingeni," where she died in 1900 and was buried near the site of the old village of Mtenguleni Uka Soera close to the Kakolo stream; her grave is now marked by an euphorbia tree. The site is on the farm owned by Major Jefferies, O.B.E., which prior to the invasion of the Ngoni used to be the land of the Achewa chief, Kampara.

Soera is well remembered by many natives who are living to-day, and although she died at a great age it is said that she was in possession of her full faculties until the last. She is described as being a real chieftainess and it is said that in later years if annoyed by the younger generation she would lay about her with her *mchiza* (staff) in a lusty manner. Many amusing tales are told of her astuteness and dry humour.

After Zongendaba's death, Soera chose for a very beautiful woman, named Nthonane, who was a young sister-wife to the house and who had borne no children, one, Sawaza Mazanku, as a seed taker, for which he received twenty head of cattle. A daughter was born and named Ndawiri Jere; she now resides in the Fort Manning District of Nyasaland and from her this information was obtained. Ndawiri looked upon Ntutu Mpezeni as her brother, and Ndawiri was, and is, looked upon as one of Zongendaba's children. She married Ndawombi, since dead, and has one son, Ndawombi Hara.

It is agreed by the old indunas that Ntutu Mpezeni would have been about nine years of age when he crossed over the Zambesi, that he was carried across as befitting a Paramount Chief's heir, that, prior to the crossing, Zongendaba had given him a little shield and an assegai, and that he had killed his first duiker buck before the crossing. This is also borne out by the sons of Zimakazi Lavu Ngoma and Ngandu Mbawa, both of whose fathers were set the task of being servants to the chief's heir in his youth.

159 was a son of Zongendaba and died after Mombere. After Mombere's death he was acting chief for some years until Chimtunga was appointed.

643 (15) The following is a list of indunas and chiefs who crossed the Zambesi in November, 1835:—Chief Zongendaba, Chief of the Ngoni. Chief Gwaza Tole, Chief Councillor. Chief Njekwane, Chief Military Induna. Indunas: Zulu Gama, Military Adviser; Mguzulu, Induna Zidomba Regiment; Somfula, Induna Somfula Regiment; 173 Mgal, Induna Majekwane Regiment; Ntabeni, Induna Zidomba Regiment. Chief 161 Gwaza Tole was also Captain of the Machaya Imiti Regiment. Chief Njekwane was 551 Captain of the Zimpofu Regiment. Regiments:—Majekwane, Zidomba (black oxhide, 643 white spot), Somfula, Machaya Imiti (red and black hide, white spots), Zimpofu. Wives 645 of Zongendaba who crossed over:—Chibhenya Mkhlapa, Great Mother; Susera Nqumayo, 701 Great Wife; Umene Nzima, mother of Mombere; Nqutu Nzima, mother of Mtwalu; 515 Mavochi Mkhlapa, mother of Mzukuzuku; Chigomane, Nguluwe, Ndanya Mbanzima, 543 Mamboe Gama, Vuyakhazi, Mwachuma, slave wife and rain-maker? Daughters:—Lomagazi and Mphangela. Sister:—Qochiwe.

A further list of Zongendaba's wives who may or may not have crossed over:— 173 Nthomane, Bozayamanya, Zin-Khahl, Nquanceleni, Nkheleni, Nshanya, Mabeti. 161 Brothers and half-brothers of the chiefs who crossed over:—Ntabeni, Mgal, Somfula, 551 Mabuzubuxyu, Ngoya, Unekwane, Uhallo, Ukhungwayo, Unilina, Mtiyane, Lomapele, 543 Chief Diviner or *Jansusi*:—Manyonkolo.

(16) Zongendaba's sons:—Ntutu Mpezeni, Mtwalu, Ndeledele, Mombere, Maulan, Mwalule, Mwamba, Makekevu Njobvu, Mperembe, Mzukuzuku (!) Kakuya, Jachwe, Sikane, Chigamane, and others.

(17) Chief Mpezeni Jere's (Ntutu) wives:—Nyendeka Muzupa, Athungwa tribe; 545 Lupoko Phakati, mother of Tsingu Jere; Chota; Mtonga, mother of Madaimawe Jere; Mtiwa Soko, Makalanga tribe; Mawase Soko, Makalanga tribe, mother of Mgwa Jere; Malwape Hara, Makalanga tribe; Kukuya Twala, Swazi tribe; Ntombiyimbi, First Wife. 727 Eldest Son:—Tsingu Jere; married Nkuchwa. Both were shot in the Rebellion of 1898. Grandson:—Chilwa Mpezeni II; married Augustina; heir, Pontilino.

(18) Ntutu Mpezeni Jere was buried near the cattle kraal in Lupoko village near Fort Young, Fort Jameson District, in 1900.

159 Lupoko, wife of Ntutu Mpezeni I and mother of Tsingu was buried near the cattle 173 kraal in Lupoko village, in 1901. 766

727 Tsingu Jere was shot after court martial and buried near Chipinga old camp near Maesa Hill, 1898.

Nkuchwa, wife of Tsingu Jere, shot by Lt. Poole's troops in the Vubwi Valley; buried on the top of Naawe Hill, near Christie's Farm, in 1898.

173 Other Ngoni Regiments:—Mayungu (Ntutu Mpezeni's regiment); Machihungu, 704 Mavimba, Mahiza, Zinyoka, Mascho, Manyba, Zinkondo, Machona, Mahora, Manyera, Mahema, Kamlayenda, Mafelakudeni, Chimalilembalemba.

179
681 when the death penalty can hardly be exacted, or compensation made in the delivery over of slaves, they find it hard to satisfy demands and make a show of justice.

171
[361] Now let us speak of the social life of the people. The Ngoni differ from most of the Central Africa tribes in their habit of living in large unprotected villages. The tendency of most of the other tribes is to scatter themselves in very little hamlets over a wide area, with scarcely a path of communication between the villages. Where war has harassed them they have built huge stockaded villages for their mutual protection, but as soon as assured peace has come again, the towns have split into numerous distant groups of houses. This seems to be caused by the dread and mistrust of one another which the people have through their superstitious belief in a evil eye, and in witchcraft, and through the perpetual little quarrels that arise. A carrier who was accompanying a friend of mine described this state very well when they passed a little village of four huts, and then a few hundred yards farther on an isolated hut. Holding up his hand he cried, "Look at Mr. Thumb saying to Messrs. Fourfingers, keep your distance."

361
[692] The heart of a Ngoni village is the large circular cattle kraal. There all the court cases are tried, there the visitors are received, and there the dances are held. Round the kraal the village of beehive huts is built in regular rows, and then immediately outside the gardens begin. The village life takes the place of family life, and the headman is father of all the people. The boys after they have attained to twelve years of age or so live in huts by themselves, and the girls in huts on the opposite side of the village. These girls' quarters used to be most sacredly guarded, and any man found in their enclosure after dark could be killed.

567
[621] The great part of the Ngoni nation consists of domestic slaves. They are people, or the descendants of people, who have been captured in raiding expeditions. But their position is not a hard one. If they are discontented they may change masters. They give their masters a little free labour, and in return are made members of his family; he espouses all their quarrels, looks after them in sickness, and shares some of his superfluity with them, but they have to share some of their necessities with him.

• 595 Polygamy was the universal custom of the people until recently. Now hundreds of polygamous unions are being dissolved every year. But in the rougher days polygamy was a necessary

condition. It helped to maintain the comparatively high morality of the people. And it was never allowed to go to the extremes that the Tonga or others went to when a single chief would have 100 wives. The expensiveness of marriage put a limit on a man's matrimonial ambitions. Yet polygamy was essentially an evil custom. It was based on sensuality and on indolence. And when Christianity comes bringing industry, and self-restraint, it must disappear.

In the old days the chiefs would not allow the men to marry till they were over thirty, and the women were strong and full grown. This preserved the splendid physique of the tribe. But now the laxer customs of the Central Africans is telling on the Ngoni, and one of our hardest tasks is to absolutely refuse marriage to couples whom we think to be too young for this serious responsibility. I have a marriage service every Tuesday, at which I usually unite eight or ten couples in holy wedlock. But these have first of all to come to me that I must judge by appearance, for they cannot tell their ages, whether they have reached the stature of manhood and womanhood. Then if I am satisfied the banns are published and they are married.

But before a man has reached this stage, he must first pay his father-in-law a dowry for his daughter. The value of the dowry varies, according to the rank of the family into which he would marry. The daughter of a chief might be worth to her father as much as twenty cattle, while a slave might only receive two or three goats. This also was a great restraint on early marriages, for a man could not marry until he had time to gain a little wealth, and pay for his wife.

The position of a wife of an aristocrat was one of considerable ease and dignity. She had to work certainly, but she had also a considerable following of slaves to assist her in her labours. But the position of the wives of the commoners was little better than that of slaves. When the rains came on the husband sallied out with his wives. He sat on an ant hill and smoked, and from this exalted position directed the labours of his wives who hoed.

In this the Ngoni were less noble than their neighbours, for many of the surrounding people think it is a disgrace to send the woman to the gardens. When the harvesting came, the women went to the gardens and reaped and carried home the grain, while the husband prepared the barns. And women pounded the grain and cooked it. While the men had the pleasure of eating it.